



Public Affairs Office

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May 9, 2002

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Corps to clear shoaling at New River

WILMINGTON, N.C.— The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, responding to urgent concerns about shoaling in the Intracoastal Waterway at the New River Inlet Crossing and the side channel to Jacksonville, has adjusted the work schedule with its AIWW dredging contractor. Cottrell, the Corps Contractor, will move to the New River area as soon as dredging at the Oak Island Coast Guard Station is completed, and will dredge approximately 100,000 cubic yards of material, placing it on North Topsail Beach. "We estimate that will be sometime near the weekend of May 18th, depending on whether any unforeseen equipment or weather issues arise to cause delays," said Dennis Lynch, the Wilmington District engineer supervising the construction contract.

"We had an obvious and urgent need in this area," said Navigation Project Manager Daniel Small. The AIWW was shoaled to 7.5 feet, preventing fishermen from getting out to work, and hampering training operations from the U.S. Marine Corps base at Camp Lejeune. Some areas in the side channel are shoaled to 3 feet.

Small expressed appreciation for the rapid response of state and federal natural resource agencies in consulting on the out-of-season placement of sand at North Topsail. "This is a severely eroded beach, and any turtle nests in that area would have been immediately destroyed by tides," he said. "The Corps is fortunate to have Jean Beasley, Director, Topsail Island Sea Turtle Project, as our turtle monitor for this work. We know she'll do a top-notch job," Small said. "This is a win-win situation. Some residents whose homes have been threatened by extreme erosion will get added sand in front of their homes, and fishermen, the U.S. Marines, and other Waterway and New River Inlet users will again have safe navigation."